

Race Car Drivers AND Business Owners Win on The Corners... Not on the Straight

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Car racing comes down to cornering. Everything else being equal, the driver that can maintain the highest speeds through the corners will have the fastest lap times. The whole objective when taking a corner is to have the fastest possible speed when exiting the corner.

It's not about having the fastest speed as you come into the corner, or even in the middle of the corner... the most important segment of a turn is last corner exit before a straight. How fast the driver is going as they exit the corner determines the speed of the car during and at the end of the straight.

Increasing the average speed of an entire straight will have a greater impact on lap times than increasing average speed over shorter distances such as entry to the turn or the turn itself.

The 'line' or path a driver takes when driving through a corner will determine exit speed. It's important to note, the shortest path around a corner is rarely the fastest. Instead, the driver picks a line that allows the greatest radius or straightest path through the corner. So, the driver has two objectives when entering a corner:-

1. Exiting the corner at the highest speed
2. Getting back to the accelerator at the earliest possible point

This allows them to harness, control and maximize the power of one of the ultimate speed machines.

Like racing cars, I view business as a powerful speed machine. Unfortunately, most business owners don't have a clue how to harness, control and maximize the power of this machine. Instead of driving their business with the confidence, intention and fluidity of a skilled racing car driver, it's driving them, while they grip the wheel of their business with tight, white knuckles, frantically turning the wheel at the last minute to avoid crashing into the obstacle that's just appeared in front of them and yelling out the window at the other drivers who they blame for the carnage they're trying to avoid on the track. Alternatively, many other business owners are cruising along in their business like they are driving Miss Daisy. Their business is coasting without much drama, and they putz around corners and down the straight while their competitors whiz past them giving them the finger in their rear view mirror. And some of you will be the driver that's whizzing past the competitors or is currently out in front, yet you're one wrong move away from blowing a tire or spinning off the track and into the wall.

Every business has corners and every business has straights. And, like novice drivers, most business owners focus too much of their time and energy trying to make money, i.e. increase lap time, on the straight when

instead they need to get better at cornering. How often in your business do you focus on making money as fast as you can in the high season (the straight)? Then you and your team collapse exhausted at the end of the week or month or year, using the down time to recover while trying to reserve cash or living off your line of credit, so you can do it all again next season? Like racing car drivers who focus on maximizing their speed on the straight, your objective when you enter the corner (your low season or down time) determines how fast you exit the corner and therefore how much money you make during the high season. And, if you invest your time during the low season focusing on how you can increase your averages during the high season -- average number of leads, average conversion rate, average \$ sale, average client retention, average profit margin -- then just like a highly skilled racing car driver, you'll increase your lap time and make more money by increasing your average speed in the high season.

When it comes to winning championships it's rarely the performance of the car and almost always the performance of the driver that determines whether or not they are popping the bubbly on the podium at the end of the race. How often are you popping the bubbly in your business, just like Nico Rosberg, winner of the opening race of the 2014 Formula One season?